

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the to the Office Action dated October 9, 2007, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on January 9, 2008. The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6-8, 10-12, 14-15, 17-19, 22-24, 26-31, and 35-38 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Butler (US Patent No. 6,018,340) in view of McFedries (e-book titled "Complete Idiot's Guide to Windows XP," published 10/03/2001, pages 1-7).

Applicants cancelled claims 2, 3, 11, 12, 18, 19, 28, 29, and 35-38 without prejudice. Further, Applicants present new claims 39-46 for consideration by the Examiner. Applicants believe that no new matter has been introduced by the new claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 1, as amended, recites the limitations of associating a first window with a window area, where a first application executes within the first window and automatically placing the window within the window area in response to a first user input via a first function key. Amended claim 1 further recites the limitations of automatically changing the size of the first window within the window area, in response to a second user input via a second function key, such that the first window has a first predetermined aspect ratio that decreases at least one dimension of the first window, but still allows a user to view at least a portion of the first application executing within the first window. In addition, amended claim 1 recites the limitations that, prior to changing the size of the first window, the first window occupies a first portion of the window area, and, in response to the second user input via the second function key, the first window is sized to occupy a second portion of the window area. None of the cited references teach or suggest these limitations.

Butler discloses an operating system subsystem that includes functions to create, move, size, and remove screen objects such as display windows, selection menus appearing in the display windows, graphical icons, and the like. In column 1, lines 59-64 of Butler, the user creates boundaries forming a window area on the computer

monitor display (also see Figures 3-4). The user may have several applications running at the same time. However, only a single application can be active at a given time. Therefore, column 14, lines 33-38 explains that the user may alternate between displaying different applications in the window area by simultaneously pressing the ALT key and the TAB key. Butler teaches that this key combination brings up a switching window that contains a list of all applications running concurrently and allows the user to switch to (i.e., activate) a different application by choosing one application from the list.

As the above-description of Butler makes clear, this reference does not teach or suggest the limitations of amended claim 1. For example, amended claim 1 recites that a window area is associated with an application (referred to as a "window" in the pending claims). Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner misinterpreted the reference (specifically, window areas A, B, C, and D in Figure 4) by concluding that Butler teaches associating a window area with an application. Rather, as described above, Butler teaches that several applications are associated with each window area. Consequently, Butler cannot teach that an application can be automatically placed within the window area in response to the user providing a first input via a first function key, as also recited in amended claim 1. Butler only teaches that when the user presses a combination of function keys, an intervening switching window appears and only after that can the user choose one application from a list of applications to place in the window area. This functionality is far different from what amended claim 1 recites.

Furthermore, McFedries fails to cure the deficiencies of Butler. McFedries teaches using window techniques of minimizing, maximizing, and restoring for navigating the Windows XP operating system. The Examiner argues that using a restore button that allows a user to put the window back exactly the way it was before minimizing or maximizing it, described on page 4 and illustrated in Figure 4.3 of McFedries, is analogous to automatically sizing the first window within a window area in response to a second user input recited in amended claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Amended claim 1 recites that the size of the first window within the window area is changed such that the first window has a first predetermined aspect ratio that decreases at least one dimension of the first window, but still allows a user to view at

least a portion of the first application executing within the first window. This is not analogous to restoring the window from a minimized state, disclosed in McFedries, because clicking the restore button increases the size of the minimized window from a small icon on the bottom of the monitor to the way the window was before it was minimized.

Furthermore, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that, prior to changing the size of the first window, the first window occupies a first portion of the window area. This is not analogous to restoring the window from a maximized state, disclosed in McFedries, because, as is well-known, in the maximized state the window occupies the whole monitor.

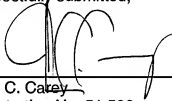
As the foregoing shows, the combination of Butler and McFedries fails to teach or suggest each and every limitation of amended claim 1 and, therefore, cannot render this claim unpatentable. For this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is in condition for allowance and requests that the 103(a) rejection be withdrawn. Claims 6-8, 39, and 40 depend from allowable amended claim 1 and, therefore, are also in condition for allowance.

Furthermore, independent claims 10, 17, 26, and 27 have been amended to reflect limitations similar to those of amended claim 1. Therefore, amended claims 10, 17, 26, and 27 are in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as amended claim 1. Claims 14, 15, 22-24, 30, 31, and 42-46 depend from allowable amended claims 10, 17, 26, and 27 and, therefore, are also in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above remarks, Applicants believe that they have overcome all of the rejections set forth in the Office Action dated October 9, 2007, and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, please contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



John C. Carey
Registration No. 51,530
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicant